

Modern Technology and Priority Connectivity Improves Indiana Public Safety Response

Full-Service Police Department Makes the Move to FirstNet



Anderson is an industrial town located northeast of Indianapolis, Indiana. It's home to 58,000 people served by the Anderson Police Department.

The agency employs 108 police officers, including a fully-trained and equipped SWAT team—all patrolling an area of 41 square miles. This means access to a reliable communication network is essential to protecting the community.

A Network Law Enforcement Deserves

Assistant Chief of Police Mike Lee knew it was time to revamp the department's technology system when it became obvious that the use of hotspots to power mobile data terminals (MDTs) in the field wasn't providing the priority connection needed. In addition, Anderson officers required dependable cellular coverage to improve accessibility and communication while on duty.

"I saw an advertisement for FirstNet and the network stability instantly intrigued me," he said.

Lee's department worked closely with FirstNet to move to its dedicated broadband communications platform and train personnel on new ruggedized smartphones, including, "taking crime scene photos and video, and capturing documents to upload to the case management system."



Priority Connections When Needed Most

"The reliability and signal strength that FirstNet delivers has really improved our working environment," said Chief Lee.

FirstNet's public safety priority and preemption have aided the department in a number of emergency situations when communication was crucial to the response. For example, the SWAT team used the FirstNet smartphones to safely communicate with a barricaded suspect until a crisis negotiator was able to assist.

And when patrolling a large event involving thousands of people, officers used the devices to confidently patrol the scene, even though commercial cell service was virtually non-existent due to a combination of location and the number of people in the area.

Apps That Make a Difference



To enhance their daily work, the officers use multiple FirstNet apps they can quickly access on their smartphones with high security.

“Our officers really like the Push-To-Talk feature,” said Chief Lee. “It allows them to communicate with one another on a more private network than radio provides.”



Officers also connect the Active911 app to their CAD system to receive important call notifications in real-time in the field.

“If they’re out of the car and not in front of the MDT, they can receive information via a text that they can continue to reference throughout the response,” Chief Lee added. This means his officers are safer and have improved situational awareness, even when away from the vehicle, and especially if information is sensitive and shouldn’t be shared via radio channels.

A Dependable Network and Team

In addition to joining a network built for law enforcement, Anderson Police Department also gained a dedicated team to support them with future FirstNet efforts.

“FirstNet has provided excellent customer service and been incredibly responsive to any needs we have,” said Chief Lee. “We didn’t only switch platforms, they helped us change how we do things.”

Anderson looks forward to expanding FirstNet usage to continually improve police operations, personnel capabilities and community response.



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